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ABSTRACT

Based on the procedures, materials, and resources used in "A Study of the Feasibility of Vocational Modules", this manual is one of the products of the study. Since guidelines for feasibility studies in the areas of public services that relate to human behavior are not clearly defined, it is hoped that this manual will guide, support, and lessen the efforts of other practitioners contemplating such studies. Procedures used by the Navajo Division of Education and American Institutes for Research in designing a vocational education curriculum for a community school serving Indians in Navajo, New Mexico, are generalized for more universal use. The major tasks selected as fundamental to a feasibility study are: (1) determination of goals and conditions; (2) identification of people and agencies; (3) analysis of resources available; (4) review of previous studies; (5) use of advisory committee(s); (6) collection of data; (7) analysis of data; (8) interpretation of data; (9) formulation of conclusions and recommendations; (10) statement of feasibility; and (11) time/task/responsibility chart. These tasks are fully described. Attention is given to the problems encountered; suggestions for solving the problems are provided. (NEC)

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A Feasibility Study

Planning Manual

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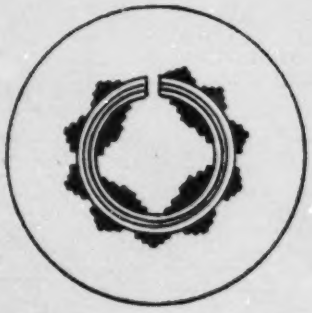

Navajo Division

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Window Rock, Arizona

And

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For Research

Palo Alto, California

A FEASIBILITY STUDY PLANNING MANUAL

This planning manual is one of three publications completed by the Navajo Division of Education, with subcontract assistance from the American Institutes for Research (AIR), under provisions of Federal Grant No. G007603818 from the United States Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, under Part C of the Vocational Education Act of 1963.

- A Study of the Feasibility of Vocational Modules
- A Feasibility Study Planning Manual
- Catalog of Vocational Education and Related Programs Designed for Instruction of American Indians

June, 1978

The Navajo Division of Education of the Navajo Nation and the Youth Development Research Group of AIR with Joseph Bellenger as coordinator, were responsible for the research and writing of this planning manual. Points of view or opinions stated do not necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

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INTRODUCTION

The planning and implementation of a feasibility study has been accomplished many times. Books on technical report writing and business management provide guidelines for feasibility studies that deal with cost and capability. Guidelines for feasibility studies in the areas of public services that relate to human behavior are not so clearly defined.

This "Feasibility Study Planning Manual" is based on the procedures, materials, and resources used in the feasibility study listed on the title page, and is published as one of the products of the study. The intent of the manual is to lessen the efforts of others in doing similar feasibility studies, or if not that, to guide and support their own efforts.

Although this Planning Manual derives from a specific and unique situation, an attempt has been made to generalize the procedures for more universal use by others. Certain problems are stated that will be common to other studies. Remedies for these problems will vary with circumstances; however, general questions are included throughout the document that can assist in the planning for specific conditions.

The major tasks selected as fundamental to a feasibility study are listed below. These tasks are described and attention is given to the problems encountered and to suggestions of ways to solve the problems.

1. Determination of Goals and Conditions
2. Identification of People and Agencies
3. Analysis of Resources Available
4. Review of Previous Studies
5. Use of Advisory Committee(s)
6. Collection of Data
7. Analysis of Data
8. Interpretation of Data
9. Formulation of Conclusions and Recommendations
10. Statement of Feasibility
11. Time / Task / Responsibility Chart

TASK I. DETERMINATION OF GOALS AND CONDITIONS

The determination of the goals of a feasibility study is intimately related to the desire to accomplish a certain objective that presumably has not been previously achieved. Perhaps the most obvious example of this is seen in the current proliferation of environmental studies which frequently determine the feasibility of building a power plant, a dam, etc.

These things have been built and have performed successfully. But with the new requirements for environmental control, previous answers are no longer sufficient. The goal of determining whether new solutions can be found becomes the province of feasibility studies which may take many forms and directions. For instance: Is the project economically feasible? It can be done, but will the cost be greater than the supply of money? If the money is available, will there be profits? If no profits, will there be governmental subvention?

A non-scientific problem solving situation analogous to a feasibility study is the family decision on vacations. We have enough money to go to the beach, but not to the beaches in Spain. We have enough money to go to Spain but my wife won't fly and there isn't time for a boat trip and so on until a plan is found that is feasible; that is, one that can be implemented when all the conditions have been met. In contrast a formal feasibility study requires the use of appropriate scientific methods that carefully define the research problem; explores alternative problem solutions; collects empirical evidence on each additional possibility; and systematically selects, implements, and evaluates the best alternative.

In most feasibility studies goals and the conditions are first determined and then evidence to be collected is delineated as that most pertinent to the answer of what is feasible or what is not -- or what is somewhat feasible! The evidence is collected and the answer to feasibility is then deduced.

The best way to set goals is to first ask a simple question, for example, "Are vocational modules feasible?" This was the basic question of the feasibility study conducted in the project noted earlier and which provided the experience for the content of this manual. The next step is to describe the conditions under which you wish or expect your goals to be attained. For example, in the vocational modules study the list of conditions

was:

1. A small student (youth and adult) population.
2. A fairly wide range of occupations available for placement.
3. The need for both youth and adults to enroll in vocational classes.
4. Preparation for jobs in the community, on the Reservation at large, and off the Reservation.
5. Community support for vocational education.
6. The labor requirements of employer.

assist in setting goals and conditions, the director of a feasibility study may receive from the client a statement or description of the general purposes of the study, or the client may describe the project, and ask the question, "How can it best be done?"

For example, a dentist may wish to increase the number of patients s/he can serve, and may contemplate that s/he can do so by hiring another dental assistant, or s/he might simply wonder whether another dental assistant would improve services to the patients. You are asked to study the problem and make recommendations. You suggest a feasibility study. The dentist agrees. The problem of determining one or more goals now arises.

Does the doctor desire to increase her/his income? Is s/he interested in establishing more effective ways of providing dental care? Is there an available dental assistant that s/he wishes to hire? It is from such a set of general purposes that one or more goals can be established.

The process of goal setting requires some experimentation. A good way to approach the problem is to write down some simple feasibility questions that seem to fit the client's purposes. In the example above the following questions could be examined:

- "Is it feasible to hire another dental assistant?"
- "Is it feasible for the dental office to increase the number of patients served?"
- "Is it feasible for this office to experiment with better ways to provide dental care?"

Which one of these goals will best serve the purpose? "One goal" is emphasized as the best way to go. Other requirements may then be established as conditions. A feasibility study can more clearly and effectively address itself to a single goal rather than multiple goals.

The determination of the "one goal" is, at this point, a matter of the client's emphasis, or, if s/he tosses the decision to you, a matter of looking for the best way to arrange conditions in relationship to the goal.

From among the alternative goals in the above example, the one selected, for example, may be "Is it feasible for the dental office to increase the number of patients?" The statement of conditions must now be made. The following list is selected to include the perceived requirements (conditions).

1. The doctor's working time will remain the same.
2. The square feet of working space will remain the same.
3. The quality of dental care will not decrease.
4. There will be an increase in profits.

A difficulty arises immediately: Have all pertinent and important conditions been discovered? What this means is that no feasibility study can, a priori, completely anticipate all relevant information, and the researcher must be sensitive to the intrusion of clues that may extend or modify the list of conditions. In other words, honest efforts must be made to explore all circumstances that develop during the study that would affect the success of performance aimed at achieving the stated goal.

One way to manage unanticipated conditions is to complete the feasibility study based on the pre-determined conditions and add an "if" section to include the newly found circumstances that seem relevant and important. In other words, if the new information was included in the list of conditions, then the feasibility statements and recommendations would be modified accordingly. Appropriate comments would follow on the differences between the two sets of conclusions and a judgment on the significance of those differences.

TASK 2. IDENTIFICATION OF PEOPLE AND AGENCIES

There will be some people and agencies that are immediately identifiable as ones that can contribute important information for the study. For instance, if established rules and regulations are involved, appropriate officials of regulatory bodies must be on the list. Members of a school board and the state department of education may be required to determine the legality of, for one instance, the mixing of adults and youth in the same class. All agencies that have roles and responsibilities that impinge on the results of the study should be on the list.

There are at least four categories of individuals to identify. These include first, those persons who represent agencies, and, second, those persons who by position and knowledge can help. A third category which requires sensitive recognition entails the secretaries, accountants, peripheral staff, bosses, etc. that will at various times be involved. A fourth, and most important category represents those persons who will be the subject of the research.

The first procedural step to take in identifying the first three categories of persons is to write down the names of all people with whom you meet. Include title, affiliation, address, telephone number, and any other information which may seem useful. This procedure will save time and embarrassment as the study progresses.

The second step is to determine which agency representatives are most important to the study. This is not always easy, and at times your first best guess will miss. The essential point is to move with caution. Explore. Ask questions. Explain your purpose and seek advice. But do not too soon ask with whom you should work. In fact, it is usually best to leave that question until after you have become acquainted with various staff persons. The decision may emerge in a natural way.

The second list -- persons who can help but are not directly involved -- may include your landlord (if you are working away from home), a politician, the person you contact at a meeting, the storekeeper, a parent, an attorney, etc. You may wish to involve some of them later -- on an advisory committee, for example. As mentioned before, write down as soon as possible the pertinent contact information. Be accurate. Get their cards or note the information. We all like that kind of recognition. Give them your card.

Yes, you do need cards.

The third category represents persons involved primarily in the mechanics of getting your study done. Perhaps a listing here is not quite so important, but it helps you remember names which in turn helps get typing done, people paid, etc. It is all a matter of good human relations and clear communication. Do not neglect it.

In all instances, each list of names will increase. Discard no names until you have finished. An occasional review of the lists may even jog your memory about needed action, stimulate a thought that will be productive or tell you that it is time to bring someone up to date on recent happenings.

Feasibility studies in the areas of education and social services frequently require a needs assessment of a given population. It then becomes necessary to identify those persons who will be the sample of individuals within the target population. This is the fourth category of persons listed above.

A 10-20 percent random sample is generally advisable. A scientifically established random sampling method should be used to identify the subjects of the needs assessment. There may also be other groups who are expert in fields related to the study. In this case either a sampling or contact with a non-random selection of available experts could provide you with valuable information.

TASK 3. ANALYSIS OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Resources include time; money; previous studies; working space; materials; and people assistance for secretarial services, interviews, and other research tasks. In some cases answers to the availability of these resources are fairly obvious and somewhat predetermined. But in some educational and social research studies among minority and/or second language groups -- in fact probably with any group--there will be unanticipated events that will disrupt your time schedule.

Cultural traditions and beliefs must be important to members of your research team. Persons native to the culture in which the feasibility study is done should be on the team, but their assignment and time commitment should not in most instances take precedence over cultural values. Be aware of these differences and allow for unanticipated changes in your predetermined plan.

In "planning" for change as you progress, determine if you have enough funding to over-staff in some areas -- or is it better to allow a small staff and to take more time? Does your project allow for an extension of time? Or is it better to reduce your study's scope in some aspect without damage? In other words, an internal "mini-feasibility study" of how to restructure your plan may be necessary.

If the field work is 1000 miles away, how do you travel, where do you stay, and for how long at a time? These are all questions that may have alternate answers. Take a little time to research this problem and make changes if you find a better situation.

The same can be said for working space and secretarial help. If you are involved with a principal contractor, subcontractor, and/or other outside agencies (such as a school district), you may be able to maintain more than one work area. This has some obvious advantages, but also permits scattering of your paperwork. Getting all the paper together later on may be more than these other advantages.

Previous studies that are relevant to your project are important to include as a data base. The next task elaborates on the use of this resource. The analysis of how best to use available resources is not a major activity, and often is quite obvious. But some pre-planning and the establishment -- at least mentally -- of a flow chart for the use of resources is well worth doing.

TASK 4. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

Researchers do this almost automatically. Discover what studies have been conducted and where their reports are kept. Is there a locally organized research center? Look for materials outside your own discipline. For example, in the vocational modules study, research done by the Office of Program Development of the Navajo Nation provided important manpower data. A report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights entitled The Navajo Nation: An American Colony, A Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights, Washington, D.C., September 1975 contained relevant information.

Do not make this task a one-shot effort. As you get more into your study, new questions will arise. Often, those additional issues will make a second look productive. Ask the people with whom you meet and talk about written information that seems related to your project.

As you discover important written resources, get a copy of them if you can. If not, a photocopy of the significant parts should be obtained. Sometimes it is best to read, summarize, and note the relationship of the material to your study. That may be all you will need.

One caution: Do not get carried away with this task. It could become so interesting that you move away from the central purpose of your feasibility study and proceed in interesting, but tangential, directions. Keep asking yourself how each material relates to the purposes and conditions of your study.

TASK 5. USE OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S)

One of the great resources for any study of people are the people themselves. Through informal relationships much help will be gained from many persons within the scope of the study. But more is needed.

An official advisory committee is perhaps the best answer to organized and valid assistance from representative members of the target group. At least half of the committee should be from the target group. Other representatives would be from affected agencies, business, etc., and from areas of expertise relevant to the study.

There are many documents on the use of advisory committees and that information will not be repeated here. Do not be discouraged if the committee does not follow the textbook description of its performance. Cultural characteristics can be important. Absenteeism is not necessarily a sign of disinterest. Send all members full information on items on the agenda, minutes of meetings, and summaries of events as seems appropriate. Do not remove members who have agreed to serve, but attend irregularly, until you are sure that their peers support your doing so. In fact, go with your first established committee unless matters are critical to the absenteeism problem. Invite guests from time to time to fill in needed gaps of expertise, and to represent newly discovered relationships.

Allow the committee time to get acquainted with the project and its purpose. Many members will have little if any concept of research. However, give the members great respect for their ability to learn and help. Be certain that explanations and information are clear and to the point. A two-way communication will soon develop from which you will benefit greatly. Never use the committee as a rubber stamp.

TASK 6. COLLECTION OF DATA

There probably will be at least one million data collection instruments in existence with none of them available or appropriate for your newly established research project. This means that you will have to develop your own approaches or adapt existing instruments.

The first step is to determine what kind of data you need, along with a listing of where and how they can be collected. Some examples:

- Do you need summaries and analysis of existing data?
- Will the data include both objective evidence and opinions?
- Where are the data located? How available are they?
- Does the collection of data require interviews? If so, with whom?
- Can the data be collected by telephone? By mailed questionnaires? By interview? By responses to questions presented in the mass media? By searches of existing records? By a combination of these?

The answers to the above questions -- and others as appropriate to your study -- will provide guidelines for the development of the required data collection instruments. For example, if the information is to be collected by telephone, the instrument will need to be designed so that answers can be relatively short and precise. Questions would be limited in number and would be simple and direct. Examples of previously developed telephone surveys should be reviewed.

Many educational and social service feasibility studies require interviews with specific population groups. There are, of course, alternate ways of doing this. For example, questionnaires could be developed separately for various sub-groups, previous survey instruments could be used, various types of random sampling could be used, and interviews could be done by groups or individually. Instrument development must be guided by your selected method(s) of collection and the questions you want your data to answer.

In the vocational modules study, it was determined that interviews would be conducted with a random sample of Navajo families in their own homes with all members who were 15 years of age or older present and

responding to an interviewer. This study's instrument design process required knowing as much as possible about the culture and present sociology of the Navajo people and their family life. The beginning task in this process attempted to gain background information by:

1. Reading about the target population.
2. Getting to know the people.
3. Analyzing and understanding their cultural background.
4. Developing a sensitivity to the family and social structure.
5. Checking the validity of our knowledge and understanding through constant communication with representatives of the subjects of the study.

A concurrent task you will have to perform is the development of questions that must be answered to establish feasibility. The following list provides a general outline of question areas:

1. What demographic data do you need?
2. Is voluntary participation necessary? (For example, is it feasible to begin a class in "Getting Your Own Divorce"? If people will not attend, the class is not feasible.)
3. Are financial requirements a part of the study? Is a certain level of funding necessary to support feasibility?
4. What knowledge is needed about people's attitudes?
5. What background information do you give to the respondent?
6. What personnel are needed to make the project under study feasible? Are the personnel now available? If not, can they be secured?
7. Are there legal restrictions that will hamper feasibility?
8. What specific physical and mental skills are required to support the feasibility of the project?

All of the above questions would not be necessary for all feasibility studies. Other important questions will be discovered. Perhaps a staff brainstorming session can be used to establish the list of questions that must be answered to determine feasibility for your specific study.

Once the list of questions is established a means of collecting answers (data) must be determined. There are many alternatives as noted

above. You must select one or more of these alternatives and then develop an instrument(s) that can be used effectively to collect the data.

The quality of the instrument will depend on the method of its review, testing and modification. This may be one of the most trying parts of the study.

How many people do you involve in the instrument development? How do you compromise differences of opinions? Who takes responsibility for the final draft of the instrument? Does the instrument provide for answers to all of the questions on the predetermined list? Are you prepared to deal with ambiguous questions (when discovered later)? Will the instrument be tested prior to finalization? If so, how?

All-purpose answers to these -- and other -- questions would be too voluminous and varied to include here. Some general observations may be helpful as you develop and refine whatever instrument(s) is selected for the data collection process.

Make an early decision on who will be responsible for the final draft. Establish a time for completion but do not be so rigid in this that quality suffers.

When the first draft of the instrument is complete, discuss it with persons who are potential interviewees. Undoubtedly their reactions will create changes. The second draft should be given a pilot test. Depending on reactions in the field, either a final draft can be made or a third draft can be field-tested before finalization.

The field testing should be done by members of the group who will do the interviewing. In the case of bilingual natives of a minority culture, the interviewers will discover important considerations concerning time needed as related to time that interviewees will give. Some problems of translation will arise that need attention.

Three main parts of data collection have been discussed above:

- The kind of data required
- The method(s) of data collection
- The development of data collection instrument(s)

A fourth element is required and is most significant: The persons who will collect the data. You may have available experienced research personnel who can do most of the work. But in many cases of non-English culture and language groups, persons from the target population should be recruited to participate.

Use all contacts possible to get recommendations of persons who can help. The advisory committee will be very useful. Staff members of the local school(s) are possible participants and will also have suggestions. Local political groups can provide recommendations. Once a group of persons is identified to assist with the data collection, a series of training sessions will be necessary to acquaint the neophyte research assistants with the research study and their role in its implementation. Follow-up sessions during the study will be necessary.

A final point to conclude this section on data collection is the reminder that your own administration and supervision of this part of a feasibility study is critical. Such details as how to collect the information from your assistants, how to record it, how to tabulate it, etc., etc. and etc. must be decided by you and clearly communicated to all staff members. The final stages of the feasibility study will move smoothly and effectively if you plan and execute this part of the study in a well organized and professional way.

TASK 7. ANALYSIS OF DATA

The analysis of data requires first that the data be arranged in some order. As mentioned above you have already planned for this as a part of the collection process. Once the data has been collated, verified, coded, etc., and recorded in summary form you are ready to absorb what is there and then begin the process of analysis.

The problem here is that all data does not fit into an easy and simple summary. Quantitive data such as population figures, educational level, etc. are easy to handle. Questions that have multiple choice answers fall into this category. But information from previous studies and the answers to open-ended questions do not easily lend themselves to statistical counting. In other words, you will probably have data that are measurable by count, i.e., quantitatively, and other data that requires interpretation and deduction, i.e., qualititative measurement. Qualitative measurement is used to include information that is not statistically measureable. The value of the information depends on the quality of the researcher's interpretation and use of the information. How pertinent is the information to the feasibility question and how valid are the implications? These are questions that must be answered by the researcher. How do you handle these two kinds of data?

First, summarize the quantitative data collected. From that information look for trends, priorities, emphasis, etc. Central tendencies and variations will be discovered. Develop the conclusions and recommendations relating to these data. These will provide a framework and some direction to the use of the qualitative data. For example, in handling previous related surveys summarize each and write comments, conclusions, and recommendations. When this is done for each study, a final set of conclusions and recommendations can be summarized to parallel as nearly as possible your own conclusions and recommendations from the quantitave data collected.

In the end you will have sets of conclusions and recommendations from the various data sources. While each set will not be parallel or entirely compatible, the central statement on the feasibility study will direct your use of these conclusions and recommendations. For example, in the

vocational modules study, it is the question "Are vocational modules feasible?" that will control the use of the data. With such a goal in mind, reasoning and relevance will be used to accumulate an overall set of conclusions and recommendations, with an addendum of comments on disparities and conflicts including some judgment of their impact on feasiblity.

This system of analysis is most important when one is dealing with feasibility studies outside the generally accepted "cost and capability"[1] factors, or as Kanter[2] states "technical, economic and operational" factors that relate to industry and business. In feasibility studies of "social services," there are areas of individual and group behavior, values, culture, past performance, attitudes, etc. that are difficult to assess. What this means is that the researcher must accept the responsibility for predicting what people will do in the future.

By combining the feasibility conclusions as deduced from qualitative data with the quantitative data you will strengthen the soundness of your final conclusions and recommendations.

1. Houp, B. & Pearsall, P., Reporting technical information. Encino, California: Glenco Press, 1973.

2. Kanter, J. Management-oriented management information systems. Inglewood, California: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977.

TASK 8. INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Once the quantitative and qualitative data have been collected and organized, they must be related to the feasibliity goals and conditions. Some answers are clearly "yes" or "no." For exmaple, if one feasibility question is "Shall we start an auto shop program?" and 50% of 500 students say "yes" you know that there will be students. But if the purpose of the program is to train for employment and all employers together indicate that they will hire only two or three graduates per year, then there will be no jobs for most graduates. All other factors may be a "yes."

The problem of feasibility then becomes the weighing of the "yes" and "no" answers. Is it possible that more jobs can be developed? Should the purpose of the auto shop program be other than job placement of graduates? This is where the researcher needs to first answer the feasiblity questions clearly based on given conditions. If, in the above example, the conditions required 10 or more placements of auto shop grauduates per year, then the project is not feasible even though all other conditions were met. However, there may well be knowledge gained in the interviewing of employers that would suggest that more job openings could be developed. It is now appropriate to include an "if" feasibility statement such as "The project is feasible <u>if</u> eight more job placements can be developed. From evidence obtained by the interviewers more jobs can be made available and efforts to do so are recommended. If these efforts are successful, then the program is feasible."

The use of qualitative data requires interpretation primarily through the use of relevance and reasoning. The quality of the results will depend on the ability of the researcher to perceive the valid relationships between the "evidence" and the feasibility question(s), and conditions.

One last word: In interpretating data, make it clear how the interpretations were made and how they are organized to support the conclusions and recommendations. Plan for this procedure as early as possible so that the data can be recorded by categories compatible with the interpretation process.

TASK 9. FORMULATION OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There may be a number of the data that overlap and/or bear upon a single item in the feasibility question and conditions. These should be combined into as few major conclusions as possible. In other words, the collected data should be combined to produce a set of conclusions that relate directly to the feasibility requirements. This does not mean to eliminate all conclusions that are peripheral. In fact, they should be included but recognized and used with less weight in the formulation of recommendations. They may provide additional insights and questions that are important to future review and study.

In the area of qualitative data special attention must be given to their relevancy to the feasibility question(s). The task here is a matter of judgment on your part in the extraction of conclusions that are significant. However, if your insight prompts the inclusion of some conclusions not clearly relevant, but of sufficient stimulus to evoke further thought, include them.

Because the decision makers who will use the results of the feasibility study; by habit, or time limits, or whatever; want clear, quick and easy-to-assimilate answers, it is desirable to write a condensed version of the conclusions to accompany the more detailed version.

The final feasibility statements may or may not be obvious at this point. Many of them may have been in your mind for some time, but there may be some surprises in the data that have not yet been clearly perceived. It is desirable to talk about the conclusions and recommendations with co-workers, the advisory committee, etc., and receive their comments. However, recommendations should not be subject to a consensus or group vote. The responsible researcher must assimilate the input and make the recommendations.

After all evidence and judgments have been assimilated, and the first draft of conclusions and recommendations completed, re-read the feasibility question(s) and conditions, re-establish clearly in your mind what was wanted, take into account the recipients and users of the study - and then begin to polish the final versions of the conclusions and recommendations. Simple straight forward statements with an annotation to note subtleties or additional insights is a good approach.

TASK 10. STATEMENT OF FEASIBILITY

The recommendations and conclusions discussed above are, in essence, the statement of feasibility. But there does need to be a final summing up which is the purpose of the "Statement of Feasibility."

The feasibility question(s) must now be answered directly with full consideration being given to the conditions. In other words, if the feasibility question has a "yes" answer, then the action--or project--triggered by the "yes" answer can begin with strong confidence in future results.

There are four categories of answers to the feasibility of a given project. They are:

1. the project is feasible
2. the project is marginally feasible
3. the project is not feasible
4. the project is feasible if some of the conditions are changed;

In the first instance, the final statement may be short, with only a few remarks to indicate how conclusions and recommendations are supportive of meeting the conditions required for feasibility.

In the case of a marginally feasible project, more explanation is needed. The weaker support areas should be analyzed to report possible errors in judgment, the variances that might occur if circumstances change, the need to be cautious before deciding there is enough feasibility to permit successful implementation, etc. The job of the researcher is not to discourage implementation but to point out the hazards that could tip the scale toward failure, or to suggest factors that might change to increase the successfulness of implementation.

When the data and evidence clearly show the project to be not feasible, the final statement should include information to indicate why a project that was hoped to be feasible was so far off the mark.

In some studies most data and evidence will support the feasibility of the proposed project, but, in a sense, are vetoed because one or two of the conditions are not fulfilled. An example of this was cited in Task 8. The overall intent of the project might permit the changing of some conditions without damage, and thus permit the decision makers for the feasibility study to proceed with the project with the recognition of some minor changes in conditions.

TASK 11. THE TIME/TASK/RESPONSIBILITY CHART

Not all feasibility studies call for a Time/Task/Responsibility Chart as a detailed outline for how recommendations can be implemented. However, it is appropriate and useful to include such in the final report. Such a chart can identify: (1) the tasks that should be implemented if the study's feasibility recommendations are approved; (2) the persons who will be assigned to perform each task; and (3) the time periods during which the task performance should occur. Many things will have been learned about the people, their culture, behavior, thoughts, etc. during the course of their involvement. This knowledge will not all appear in the feasibility report, but if it could have a bearing on a successful implementation, this kind of information can be reflected in such a management chart.

EPILOG

The scope of this brief manual on feasibility studies was limited by the time and money available as well as our perceptions of what length and content would be most useful to practitioners contemplating such studies. As stated in the introduction, the source of information was our experience gained in implementing the vocational modules study.

However, an effort was made to discover what had already been written on the procedures for doing feasibility studies. A library search was conducted but few pertinent references were identified. Many of the references dealt with studies in the field of business and industry - both private and public. However, the scope of the types of studies described was limited to "cost and capability" criteria, and thus did not necessarily serve the broader, and often non-profit, requirements of educational and social service feasibility studies.

A final search was made by the DIALOG Retrieval System, Lockheed Electronic Co., Sunnyvale, California. This search was done by cross-checking: (1) feasibility studies, (2) guidelines, (3) procedures, (4) objectives, and (5) standards in both the field of education and social science. Only one document, entitled Educational Feasibility Studies: A Conceptual Framework, was discovered that provided a framework for a feasibility study. This document, written by W. E. Hathaway of Alberta, Canada, Department of Education, appeared in The Alberta Journal of Educational Research, December 1976.

This article briefly reviews previous efforts to describe theoretical approaches to feasibility studies and then develops a conceptual framework for educational feasibility studies. Anyone embarking on such a study will benefit from the reading of the article.

In conclusion, it is hoped that this "Feasibility Study Planning Manual" will add some impetus to the obvious need for more study and development of principles, guidelines, standards, etc. for feasibility studies, while at the same time will provide some practical advice for those persons making feasibility studies.